

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, last night this Chamber was treated to quite a speech. At times it sounded as though the President had finally heard the message that the American people sent last November. Americans want smaller government and less taxes. In fact, there were times I was expecting the President to pull out his copy of the Contract With America and put his signature on it.

But, Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words. If the President is truly serious about reducing the burden and size of the Federal Government, I challenge him to join with the new Republican majority and help pass the balanced budget amendment. Only with a balanced budget amendment will Congress have the backbone and discipline to end the irresponsible and wasteful spending that has engaged this body in the last 2½ decades.

WE NEED TO GET OUR OWN HOUSE IN ORDER

(Mrs. KENNELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, last night the President was gracious in his calls for bipartisanship whenever possible in doing the people's business. One area for such bipartisan approach is the areas he suggested for tax deductions for postsecondary education. This is in the best tradition of this country, because we know that the surest route to success is education.

However, before we can do the people's business, we have to get our own house in order. It does no one any good to have someone come to this floor and impugn the patriotism of the President of the United States. Freedom of speech is the basis of our Government. It is what every one of us stands for. But when someone unfairly attacks the President of the United States on this floor, we weaken our Government, we weaken each and every one of us on whatever side of the aisle. It should end, it is unacceptable, and it is wrong, and the people do not want it.

PASS THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. BUNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. BUNN. Mr. Speaker, today, the House of Representatives takes up the balanced budget amendment again. This House has repeatedly rejected the balanced budget amendment. In that time our Government has grown ever larger, our taxes continue to increase, and the crushing burden of debt has

reached the breaking point. Either this House will pass the balanced budget amendment, or we will continue to condemn future generations of Americans to a lifetime of penance for our mistakes.

Mr. Speaker, the American people have grown cynical about the ability of their Government to control spending, and why should they not? For decades we have raised taxes rather than making the tough decisions necessary to cut spending and balance the budget. Now we have one last chance to force the Government to live within its means. We must pass the balanced budget amendment and save our grandchildren from a debt they did not run up and they do not deserve.

PROTECT SOCIAL SECURITY IN BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. BECERRA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, while some Republicans talk about buckling knees, President Clinton's stance last night was bold and firm: Cut the deficit and balance the budget, but not on the backs of our senior citizens and children.

The Republicans' so-called balanced budget amendment requires \$1.2 trillion in cuts. But get this, they will not tell us how they are going to get there. We do know one thing for sure: Republicans will not exempt Social Security and Medicare. In fact, during a recent hearing on the balanced budget amendment in the Committee on the Judiciary, every Republican but one voted against an amendment to protect Social Security from the budget ax.

I understand that Speaker GINGRICH has said in an interview recently that Social Security is off the table. If this is so, then why are his Republican colleagues voting against such an amendment and why in the past has Speaker GINGRICH himself said that "everything is on the table"? Everything includes Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, the President's words rang very true last night when he said the elderly have made us what we are. And unlike the Republicans, the President's words were very clear and unequivocal when he said "My budget cuts a lot, but it protects education, veterans, Social Security, and Medicare."

Mr. Speaker, rather than just talk about balancing the budget, I challenge the Republicans to bring their real budget cleaver out from underneath the table.

DEMOCRATS ADJUSTING TO MINORITY STATUS

(Mr. LAHOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I must say that the Democrats are adjusting

well to their new minority status. I thought it would take them at least several months to completely marginalize themselves in this Chamber, but they appear to have accomplished this in record time.

While Republicans have busied ourselves at making good on out promises to the American people to end unfunded mandates and pass a balanced budget amendment, the Democrats have put all of their energy into creating an atmosphere of cynicism and mistrust.

But the delay tactics of the Democrats will not prevent us from working the will of the American people. We Republicans will pass an unfunded mandates bill, and, we will pass a balanced budget amendment.

Someone once noted that cynicism is frustrated idealism. Last November, the Democrats witnessed the total repudiation of their ideals. Now, they have reduced themselves to a cynical display of class-envy and obstructionism.

□ 1210

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, last night President Clinton spoke of a covenant of rights and responsibilities between Government and the American people. Today we begin again the renewal of our responsibility to manage our Nation's money with common sense and discipline.

The issue of balancing the budget is not a conservative or liberal one, nor is it an easy one, but it is an essential one for us in this House, for the American people, and most assuredly, for future generations.

The 1980's saw an explosion of debt in Government, in business, and in personal finances. It threatened our economic health and strength. We dramatically addressed this crisis in 1993, and the debt is receding, but we must ensure that the competing demands for Federal resources do not erode our fiscal covenant of responsibility. That is why I believe it so important for us to adopt the Stenholm-Schaefer balanced budget amendment.

CONGRESS NEEDS A THREE-FIFTHS TAX LIMITATION ON THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. FORBES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, the families in my home area, Suffolk County, must live within their means and spend only what they take in. They have to live on a balanced family budget, and in the seven towns and the villages and

the school districts, they also must live within their means and on their budgets as well.

Only in the Nation's Capital is the notion an oddity, living within a balanced budget. For decades now the Congress only seems to know about increased spending, and to feed that addiction with increased taxes.

The Republican majority, in response to the American people and in concert with them, have charted a new course, a course that embraces a balanced budget with a tax limitation provision. This is a course that seems unique only in Washington, DC, but commonplace everywhere else in the country.

Like an errant child who needs discipline, Congress needs a three-fifths tax limitation for that discipline. Let us pass it before over taxes again.

CONGRESS SHOULD ACCEPT THE PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE AND BEGIN TODAY TO GET TO WORK FOR AMERICA

(Mr. LUTHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton's message last night was the message I heard from the Minnesotans I represent throughout last fall's campaign: If you work hard and play by the rules, you should be rewarded by a chance at achieving the American dream.

As a new Member of this body, Mr. Speaker, I came here to achieve results on a bipartisan basis for the people of my district. I applaud this Congress for its quick action on congressional reform but, Mr. Speaker, I say to the Members, that is just the beginning.

We must now get to work and fight to improve the lives of everyday Americans. Middle-class families are crying out for jobs that pay a liveable wage, for an education that provides the tools for the future, for affordable health care for themselves and their kids, and for streets free of violence and drugs. These are the reasons we were elected, to improve the lives of our fellow Americans.

Mr. Speaker, let us accept the President's challenge, stop the gridlock and bickering, and get on with making a better tomorrow. Let us begin today.

THE TAX LIMITATION BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

(Mr. BARTON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is a historic day. We are going to consider the tax limitation balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

No one, perhaps except President Clinton and some of his senior economic advisers, seriously questions whether we should balance the budget anymore. The question is how to do it.

In the Contract With America, the Republican majority says we should balance the budget with a three-fifths requirement to raise taxes, and put the emphasis not on raising taxes but on cutting spending. Why is this?

If we look at Federal spending over the last 40 years, there has been no year in which Federal spending went down. Every year Federal spending has gone up. In the years that we have had major tax increases, and we have had 16 major tax increases in the last 30 years, Federal spending has gone up and the deficit has gone up also.

Therefore, the American people want a real change. They want a tax limitation balanced budget amendment that puts the emphasis on balancing the budget by cutting spending, not by raising taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will vote for the Barton-Hyde-Dade-Geren balanced budget amendment to the Constitution with the three-fifths requirement for a tax increase.

CONGRESS MUST BALANCE THE BUDGET, BUT DO IT IN THE RIGHT WAY

(Mr. TUCKER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TUCKER. Mr. Speaker, last night the President addressed us. We have heard some of our colleagues indicate that he was equivocal, that he had one speech for the left and one speech for the right.

Indeed, however, Mr. Speaker, the President was very lucid last night. He was very clear. What he said is that he believes in balancing the budget, but the devil is in the details.

What he said, Mr. Speaker, is that yes, he embraces some of the principles in the Contract With America, but, Mr. Speaker, as every good lawyer and, indeed, as every good lawmaker should know, a contract is only as good as its terms and conditions. You must look at the specificities.

The Republicans have not offered us any specificities on how they intend to balance the budget. All they can tell us is if we do not balance the budget, we will indeed be paying for it with our children's future. If we balance the budget on the backs of our children, on the backs of our Social Security recipient, they will indeed be paying for it in their future.

Mr. Speaker, we must be conscientious. We must listen to the President of the United States. We must do it right, but we must do it rightly.

CONGRESS MUST PASS THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO PROTECT THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

(Mr. DIAZ-BALART asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, history puts so much in perspective and in context. We are going today to bring forth before this House a constitutional amendment to require that our Federal budget be balanced.

Very prosperous countries in the past, very wealthy countries, even in this hemisphere, for example, Argentina, if we look at the history in the early part of this century, Argentina was among the most prosperous countries in the world. If we look now at the dilemma that we are faced with in Mexico, an economy that is part of NAFTA, and it is a very thriving economy, these instances in our recent history and in the recent history of this hemisphere point to the fact that fiscal irresponsibility can destroy even prosperous, even very growing economies.

When we realize that even Keynes, Mr. Speaker, never envisioned permanent deficit spending, we realize that we must put our budget under constraints. We must put ourselves under constraints, as every family in America has to. We must pass this amendment to balance the budget.

URGING THE PRESIDENT TO HELP IMPLEMENT REFORMS CONTAINED IN THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

(Mrs. WALDHOLTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WALDHOLTZ. Mr. Speaker, Republicans in this Chamber have vowed to keep faith with the American people. The Contract With America lays our specific guidelines to reform the way the Federal Government conducts its business.

By ending unfunded mandates, our Government will stop the process whereby the Federal Government simply dictates policy to the States, whatever the cost. And, by passing the balanced budget amendment, the Federal Government will be forced to live within its means, a responsibility that American families accept everyday.

Mr. Speaker, Americans have overwhelmingly endorsed this reform agenda. We urge the President to help implement this agenda to restore to the Federal Government the basic values of accountability, responsibility, and individual liberty.

□ 1220

BATTLE OF THE CONTRACTS

(Mr. DURBIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, stay tuned America for the battle of the contracts today on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. In one corner the Republican contract, which